

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, in light of the present amendment and following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 3-16 and 18 are pending in the present application; Claims 2, 8, and 18 have been amended; and Claims 1 and 17 are cancelled by the present amendment. Claims 2 and 18 are amended to include allowable subject matter and Claim 8 is amended for clarification purposes only. Thus, no new matter is added by the present amendment.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1 and 17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Bloomfield et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,446,445); Claims 2-16 and 18 were objected to as dependent upon a rejected base claim, but were indicated as allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Initially, Applicants acknowledge with appreciation the indication of allowable subject matter.

In response to the rejection of Claims 1 and 17 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b), Claims 1 and 17 are canceled without prejudice by the present amendment as Applicants are filing a continuation to further prosecute these claims. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request the rejection be withdrawn.

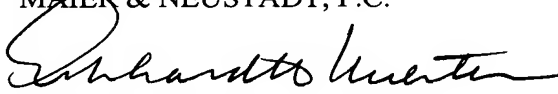
In response to the objection of Claims 2-16 and 18, these claims are amended to include their respective base claims and any intervening claims.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request the objection be withdrawn.

Consequently, in view of the present amendment and foregoing discussion, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early and favorable action is therefore requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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